

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 25, 2010

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1875

Introduced by Assembly Member Fong

February 16, 2010

~~An act to amend Section 12301.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services. An act to add Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8260) to Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.~~

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1875, as amended, Fong. ~~In-home supportive services. Homelessness: Interagency Council on Homelessness.~~

Under existing law, several agencies have prescribed responsibilities relating to homeless persons.

This bill would create the California Interagency Council on Homelessness, composed of specified members and performing duties as prescribed, to construct cross-agency and community cooperation in responding to homelessness, and to identify and apply for increased federal funding to respond to homelessness.

~~Existing law provides for the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, under which, either through employment by the recipient, or by or through a contract by the county, a nonprofit consortium, or a public authority, qualified aged, blind, and disabled persons receive services enabling them to remain in their homes.~~

~~This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to an In-Home Supportive Services program provision.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 *SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the*
2 *following:*

3 *(a) California has the highest rate of homelessness and the*
4 *highest ratio of homeless people per resident, with 360,000 people*
5 *sleeping on the streets or in shelters on any given night.*

6 *(b) Homelessness is traumatic for those who suffer it, often*
7 *leading to separated families, exacerbation of health conditions,*
8 *a rise in avoidable emergency room use, social and academic*
9 *delays among children, and greater likelihood of incarceration.*

10 *(c) Many people who lack permanent shelter and the ability to*
11 *access regular support ricochet through separate and expensive*
12 *public systems: overburdened corrections systems, overcrowded*
13 *hospital emergency rooms, mental health programs, substance*
14 *abuse treatment and detox facilities, shelters, and emergency*
15 *housing. As a result, people experiencing chronic homelessness*
16 *use a disproportionate share of state and local services.*

17 *(d) Innovative approaches across the nation and within*
18 *California show promise for reducing homelessness and the*
19 *resulting impact on state services.*

20 *(e) Changing the system and reducing homelessness requires*
21 *coordination and cooperation among federal, state, and local*
22 *governments, as well as private sector organizations.*

23 *(f) Creation of a statewide coordinating council is an important*
24 *and effective tool in supporting initiatives to end homelessness in*
25 *California.*

26 *(g) Creation of a statewide coordinating council would stem*
27 *avoidable costs of maintaining the number of homeless persons*
28 *and would, therefore, result in reducing avoidable costs to multiple*
29 *programs.*

30 *(h) Homelessness affects multiple systems in California at a*
31 *very high public cost, including housing, mental health and*
32 *substance abuse, education, corrections, foster care, health care,*
33 *and veterans services. Reducing homelessness would produce cost*
34 *savings for all these systems. Though most other states have*
35 *adopted a plan to end homelessness because of the cost impact on*
36 *all of these systems, California has not crafted a similar plan. A*
37 *codified, structured interagency council on homelessness would*
38 *help fill this gap.*

(i) In November 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger created the Governor's Homeless Initiative, which included plans to form an interagency coordinating council to reduce homelessness. The Business, Transportation and Housing Agency's 2005–10 Consolidated Plan further indicates the importance of an interagency council on homelessness. Despite these intentions, a council has not met regularly or publicly since the Governor adopted his Homeless Initiative.

(j) California must give priority to developing consolidated, coordinated, and cooperative approaches to issues of homelessness, including, but not limited to, specific issues addressing homeless youth, families, veterans, parolees, victims of domestic violence, people with substance abuse or other mental health disorders, people experiencing chronic homelessness, seniors, and disabled people.

(k) Working within current costs, a revitalized Interagency Council on Homelessness will reduce duplication of efforts and the costs of homelessness and will redirect resources to more effective approaches, developing a more integrated system and eliminating fragmentation. Other states have created interagency councils without initial investment of resources.

(l) California is not accessing all of the federal funds for homeless that it should due to a lack of coordination among some agencies. Thirty other states apply for "balance of state" funds through the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Grant Program. Application for these funds requires state agency collaboration, and could result in millions of dollars.

SEC. 2. Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8260) is added to Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

CHAPTER 7. CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON
HOMELESSNESS

8260. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) "Council" means the California Interagency Council on Homelessness.

(b) "Stakeholder organization" means a nonprofit or faith-based organization whose primary mission is to prevent or end

1 *homelessness, to provide services or health care to people who*
2 *are homeless, or to create housing for people who are homeless.*

3 *8261. (a) There is hereby created in state government the*
4 *California Interagency Council on Homelessness with a mission*
5 *to construct cross-agency and community cooperation in*
6 *responding to homelessness and to identify and apply for increased*
7 *federal funding to respond to homelessness.*

8 *(b) The Governor shall designate a lead agency or*
9 *representative from the Governor's staff to direct the work of the*
10 *council.*

11 *(c) The council shall seek all available federal funding,*
12 *including, but not limited to, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance*
13 *Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.) grant and technical assistance*
14 *funds, for purposes of funding the council and its activities.*

15 *(d) Membership of the council shall include all of the following:*

16 *(1) At least one representative with decisionmaking authority*
17 *from each of the following:*

18 *(A) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.*

19 *(B) The Department of Housing and Community Development.*

20 *(C) The State Department of Mental Health.*

21 *(D) The State Department of Social Services.*

22 *(E) The Department of Veterans Affairs.*

23 *(2) Two representatives among local law enforcement, city,*
24 *county, or city and county government, or organizations*
25 *representing these interests. One representative appointed by the*
26 *Senate Committee on Rules, the other representative appointed by*
27 *the Speaker of the Assembly.*

28 *(3) Representatives of two stakeholder organizations, with one*
29 *to be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and the other to*
30 *be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules.*

31 *(4) Two people who have experienced homelessness, with one*
32 *to be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and the other to*
33 *be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules.*

34 *(e) The council may, at its discretion, invite stakeholders, people*
35 *who have experienced homelessness, members of philanthropic*
36 *communities, and experts to participate in meetings or provide*
37 *information to the council.*

38 *(f) The Governor shall appoint a chairperson and*
39 *vice-chairperson from among the members of the council. Within*
40 *current costs, the council may establish working groups, task*

1 *forces, or other structures from within its membership or with*
2 *outside members to assist it in its work. Working groups, task*
3 *forces, or other structures established by the council shall*
4 *determine their own meeting schedules.*

5 *(g) Members of the council shall serve without compensation,*
6 *except that consumer representatives shall receive minimal*
7 *compensation if non-General Fund money is available.*

8 *8262. (a) The council shall do all of the following:*

9 *(1) Hold public meetings at least once every quarter.*

10 *(2) Provide an updated state plan to end homelessness every*
11 *two years and submit the plan to the Speaker of the Assembly and*
12 *the Senate Committee on Rules.*

13 *(b) Additionally the council may, but is not required to, do the*
14 *following:*

15 *(1) Act as the lead for coordinating and planning the state's*
16 *response to homelessness if necessary as a requirement for*
17 *application for federal funding sources.*

18 *(2) Discuss potential mechanisms for streamlining the*
19 *administration of programs across agencies and jurisdictions to*
20 *reduce duplication, consolidate availability of services, and ease*
21 *clients' access to services.*

22 *(3) Discuss potential mechanisms for streamlining funding of*
23 *homelessness programs to leverage existing resources more*
24 *effectively.*

25 *(4) Solicit input and suggestions from stakeholders, the business*
26 *community, the concerned public, and other governmental agencies*
27 *on the most effective strategies to address homelessness.*

28 *(5) Identify best practices from other states in combating*
29 *homelessness.*

30 *(6) Identify private and public funding partnerships.*

31 *(c) The council may engage or accept the services of agency*
32 *personnel, contract with nonprofit organizations, or employ council*
33 *staff to operate, manage, or conduct the business of the council,*
34 *only if this is provided by private, philanthropic, or other nonstate*
35 *funding resources available for that purpose, or the Legislature*
36 *makes a future appropriation for that purpose.*

37 *8263. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the council*
38 *shall operate within the current budget of each department and*
39 *agency represented. Each department and agency shall cooperate*

1 *with the council and furnish it with information and assistance*
2 *that is necessary or useful to further the purposes of this chapter.*

3 ~~SECTION 1. Section 12301.5 of the Welfare and Institutions~~
4 ~~Code is amended to read:~~

5 ~~12301.5. The department may secure to the extent feasible~~
6 ~~in-home supportive and other health services for persons eligible~~
7 ~~under this article to which they are entitled under the Medi-Cal~~
8 ~~Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 14000)).~~